



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **FORMER FUNERAL HOME OWNER SENTENCED FOR \$410,000 FRAUD SCHEME**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a former Unionville, Mo., funeral home owner was sentenced in federal court today for a fraud scheme that involved more than \$410,000 in false insurance claims for 59 persons who were not actually deceased.

**Roger Dean Newman**, 44, of Springfield, Mo., formerly the owner and director of Newman Funeral Home in Unionville, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Scott O. Wright this afternoon to two years and nine months in federal prison without parole. The court also ordered **Newman** to pay \$410,310 in restitution to three insurance companies.

On Dec. 8, 2004, **Newman** pleaded guilty to five counts of mail fraud and wire fraud. **Newman** admitted that, from June 19, 2001, to Dec. 11, 2003, he made false statements to three different insurance companies in order to receive unauthorized funeral expense payments for 59 individuals who were not actually deceased.

**Newman** submitted fraudulent death claims to Forethought Insurance Company in Batesville, Ind., for 34 individuals from April 10, 2002, to Dec. 11, 2003, resulting in a loss of \$263,644 to the company. **Newman** submitted fraudulent death claims to Homesteaders Insurance Company in Des Moines, Iowa, for 19 individuals from July 25, 2002, to Nov. 19, 2003, resulting in a loss of \$127,130 to the company. **Newman** submitted fraudulent death claims to Missouri Funeral Trust, Inc., in St. Louis and Jefferson City, Mo., for five individuals from June 6, 2001, to Jan. 10, 2004, resulting in a loss of \$19,536 to the company.

**Newman** admitted to committing mail fraud involving a claim check that was mailed by Missouri Funeral Trust in response to a fraudulent insurance policy death claim. **Newman** also admitted to committing four counts of wire fraud involving separate instances in which fraudulent insurance policy death claims were transmitted to insurance companies. In each case,

**Newman's** fraudulent claims resulted in a check being distributed from the insurance company and deposited into **Newman's** business checking account at the Farmer's Bank of Northern Missouri in Unionville.

By pleading guilty, **Newman** also agreed to the revocation of his Missouri Funeral Director's License, his Missouri Embalmer License and his Funeral Establishment License in conjunction with proceedings undertaken by the Missouri Attorney General's Office.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney K. Michael Warner. It was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)